

ance at Mass as a condition precedent to their availing themselves of educational endowments, so it is equally unfair to Catholics to require them to accept a purely secular and mixed system of education, which the authorities of the Church declare to be "intrinsically dangerous to faith and morals," and to require this as an indispensable condition of their enjoyment of educational endowments provided by the State. Indeed, we may add, that when our rulers, who understand our Catholic principles as well as we do ourselves, provide schools and colleges

ON THE GODLESS OR MIXED SYSTEM, and, more especially, when they so distribute these institutions as to place half of them in the northern province—as has been done in the case of the Model schools—it is difficult to absolve them from bad faith, from the deliberate intention of mocking the people with a pretended boon which they know full well cannot be availed of by more than a small fraction of the population. Yet such has been the policy of the English government towards the Catholics of Ireland, even after Catholic Emancipation has found a place on the Statute Book. In the face of such treatment, it may be useful to recall the fundamental principles which should regulate State policy in the matter of education.

1. The primary function of the State, in education, is to assist parents to discharge, with greater ease and efficiency, their parental duties of bringing up their children according to their own conscientious convictions.

2. It becomes the duty of the State, in exceptional cases, when parents, on account of some moral obligation or other cause, neglect the education of their children, and thus expose them to the danger of growing up

A SOURCE OF MORAL PESTILENCE to the community, to compel such parents to discharge their parental duty, and, in default of their so doing, to undertake the education of such children as wards of the State.

3. It is the prerogative of the State, acting on behalf of the tax payers, to see that public money, voted for educational purposes, be judiciously expended, and that the youth of the country, who are to become the bone and sinew of the State, be instructed in all matters necessary to the civic interests of the community (hear, hear).

Now, the exercise of all these rights and duties is quite compatible with a purely denominational system of education, which does not demand a single penny for the teaching of religion, as such, but merely claims recognition for the work done in the department of secular education, and is satisfied with a simple permission for the teaching of religion. In connection with this important point, on which so much hinges, I may be permitted to quote a passage from Dr. Edmund O'Reilly's work on "The Relation of the Church to Society." In his chapter on education, he writes:

"I do not demand, from the State, aid for Catholics towards religious education as such, but towards secular education. I do not ask the State to pay a shilling for lessons in Catechism. I do demand, from the State, aid for Catholics towards secular education, to be given by persons whom they are willing to trust; not by persons whom, on religious grounds, they distrust, and are bound in consistency to distrust; however unexceptionable these persons may be as members of civil society. If those teachers of secular studies whom Catholics trust, namely, Catholic teachers, season their instruction to a certain extent, with religion, the State will not have to pay for such seasoning. Let the State, if it pleases, watch the teaching, and see that it is not deficient in secular instruction for which alone the State pays. Thus it will be assured that public money is not misapplied." (It may be well to observe that the opinion advanced above on the authority of Dr. O'Reilly, is by no means that most commonly held. The more general teaching is, that the tax-payers contribute to the Treasury of the nation on the implied understanding that, in return, a sound civic education shall be given; and that a civic education, to be sound, must be based upon religion; and that religion cannot be thoroughly taught, in a mixed community except on denominational principles. Hence it would seem to follow that the State, as disbursing of the moneys of the nation, is bound to teach religion on denominational principles.)

THESE ARE OUR CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES, both as regards the nature of education and the rights and duties of the three great factors that co-operate in the work. It is clear from them that the Catholic demand, in matters of education, may be expressed concisely in the following formula, which the Bishops of England have so often proclaimed, from pulpits and platform, during the last twelve months:

"Catholics demand as a right, and cannot be satisfied with less than,

- (1) Catholic schools;
- (2) Taught by Catholic teachers;
- (3) Subject to Catholic oversight;
- (4) Under Catholic management."

But these principles, though they inspire a sense of security and confidence, have not found favor with statesmen; and statesmen control finances, and without finances the work of education cannot proceed. From even a cursory survey of the world, it will be apparent that a fierce fight on the Education Question is being waged between the forces of Denominationalism on the one side and those of Secularism on the other. To understand the nature of this warfare, and the momentous importance of the issues at stake, we must try to appreciate the character of the combatants, and the fatal results that invariably follow from the elimination of the religious element in the education of a people.

There are forms of Secularism, which though unsound in theory, prove innocuous in practice. They so work out as to render it possible to maintain Catholic schools, taught by Catholic teachers, subject to Catholic oversight and under Catholic management. Though theoretically there are no tests for teachers, practically the teacher

will be always of the same religious denomination as the pupils. Such is our system of "National Education" in Ireland; and such also, with some minor differences in detail, are THE SIMULTAN SCHOOLS OF GERMANY many of the State schools of Italy, and the peculiar type of school which exists in some of the parishes of the diocese of St. Paul in the United States. Secularism of this diluted kind can be steered clear of danger to faith and morals, and it is said to be "tolerated" by the Church (hear, hear).

But there are two other forms of Secularism which are becoming particularly aggressive at the present time, and which, in any address on "Secularism in Education," are entitled to receive more than a passing mention. I refer to the "Absolute Secularism" which, at least for the present, is the system of State education in France, and which, it is much to be regretted, finds many advocates even in England; and that other scarcely less objectionable form of Secularism which has inspired the English Education Bill, so soon to become law, and which combines Secular instruction with the teaching of what is known as "Udenominational Religion."

The former excludes the teaching of dogmatic religion altogether, but admits what is called ethical instruction, to ensure moral training. To relate its principles effectively, and to elicit the grave religious and moral dangers which necessarily flow from it, I need only quote the public utterances of some of its most prominent and capable exponents in England.

A certain Mr. Gould, who is the author of a work entitled "The Children's Book of Moral Lessons," and who holds the responsible position of official teacher in some of the Board schools in Leicester, spoke as follows before an Education Committee, of which he is a member, not many months ago. Referring to a chart which he found suspended in one of the schools giving the outlines of a moral lesson, he said—"Of course, as an agnostic, I could not recommend one section 'duties towards God; love, thanksgiving, prayer, praise; but the other section I should practically endorse—'duties to man: unselfishness, kindness, truthfulness, honesty, etc.'"

WHAT ABSOLUTE SECULARISM WOULD MEAN

If it were introduced into the schools of England. There is a brightly written serial, published in London, known as "The Ethical Review," which purports to be the organ of Absolute Secularism; and in a recent number, one of its most distinguished writers, Mr. Stanton Coit, comments as follows on a speech of Mr. Birrell, in which this gentleman made passing reference to three ascetic works—"The Imitation of Christ," Baxter's "Saint's Rest," and "The Whole Duty of Man," by Lady Dorothy Fakington:

"By the concurrence of all students of the 'Imitation' Mr. Coit writes, 'its two most prominent features are its inculcation of asceticism, and of the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Eucharist.' . . . Contrary to the whole spirit and trend of English character and life, our children are to be taught that all natural instincts and desires, attachments and inclinations, are essentially vile and wicked, and must be torn up by the root. Suffering for suffering's sake is the test of moral perfection. To die to happiness, to die to every finite attainment and all carnal interests, this is to please God and inherit eternal life." He then proceeds, in a paroxysm of impassioned eloquence—"In the name of childhood, for a man's sake, and with the sentiments of all true Englishmen to back me, I declare the principle of Asceticism to be a moral assassination. Then to hell with it from whence it came, and which it brings with it! At least let our little children be spared."

A little later, in the same essay, with characteristic consistency, he thus refers to the doctrine of eternal punishment, which is emphasised in the "Saint's Rest":

"England has not only broken from Rome, she has also broken away from hell fire. Englishmen have outgrown it, as they have outgrown other atrocities, like the practice of cannibalism. There must be no hell fire in the schools of England! Better let the 'whole duty of man' and all the rules of all the codes of human conduct be forgotten; better let us sink back to the unthinking impulsiveness of the lower animals than that our children be made to do right through the imaginative dread that, if they do not, sparks of fire will some day light all over their bodies and keep them in agony forever."

And what, think you, are the moral sanctions which this typical exponent of Absolute Secularism would substitute for the eternal truth of faith, which he thus contemptuously rejects? Furling with melodramatic effect to Edmund Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," he quotes with approval the following well-known passage:—"The unbought grace of life is gone; it is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor, which FELT A STAIN LIKE A WOUND."

He then proceeds to rhapsodize as follows:

"The sensibility of principle is still honor, but honor idealised, honor interior, honor spiritual. This sensibility of honor is the religious sanction for no higher is conceivable." Address this sublime sanction of virtue to the 'gamins' of the Dublin Liberties, or to the coster-mongers of White chapel, and you shall soon behold a moral transformation that will astonish the world (cheers). The form of Secularism which is combined with udenominational religious teaching is scarcely less objectionable than that just described. It permits simple Bible reading and the study of books of Fables for the purpose of inculcating moral lessons; but in the enforcement of virtue by religious sanctions it is utterly unsatisfactory. Besides it is flagrantly inconsistent;

for, while it purports to teach an unsectarian religion,

IT IS ITSELF BITTERLY SECTARIAN.

In any case, to the Catholic mind, unsectarian religion is a form of Protestantism; it degrades the pupils to what has been called the "lowest common measure" of belief; and hence it has been declared by the Holy See to be more dangerous than the entire absence of religious teaching. The Congregation of Propaganda sent an instruction on "Mixed Schools" to the Bishops of Ireland, on the 16th January, 1811, in which the following passage occurs:

"It is much safer that secular learning only should be imparted in mixed schools, than that the so-called fundamental and common articles of the Christian religion should be taught in a restricted manner, each sect having reserved for it its own peculiar tenets of belief. To deal with boys in this manner would seem particularly dangerous."

Let me conclude this long and desultory address by applying to the objectionable forms of "Secularism in Education" the words of our divine Lord: "By their fruits shall you know them." And, by way of illustrating the apostrophe of the text, I would quote a few brief extracts from prominent public men, on the results of Secularism in the State schools of America,

ARCHBISHOP IRELAND, OF ST. PAUL, SPEAKS AS FOLLOWS:—

"The State school is non-religious. There never can be positive religious teaching where the principle of sectarianism rules. What is the result? The school deals with immature, childish minds, upon which silent facts and examples make deepest impressions. It claims nearly all the time remaining to the pupils outside of rest and recreation. It treats of land and sea, but not of heaven. It speaks of statesmen and warriors, but not of God or Christ. It tells how to attain to success in this world, but says nothing about the world beyond the grave. The pupils seem and listen and insensibly form the conclusion that religion is of secondary importance. Religious indifference becomes his creed. His manhood will be, as was his childhood at school, estranged from God and the positive influence of religion. The great mass of children receive no freside lessons, and attend no Sunday school; and the great mass of the children of the country are growing up without religion." Bishop Johnstone, of the Episcopal Church in Western Texas, says—

"The inability of the Public schools of our land to teach any system of morals is going to lead, within a few years, to a struggle the like of which this country has never seen, and it will be with a generation that believes nothing at all."

Dr. Lovi Sealey, of the State Normal school of Trenton, New Jersey, writes—

"A little less than 50 per cent of all the children of our country do not frequent any Sunday school. The meaning of these figures is simply overwhelming. More than one-half of the children of this land now receive no moral religious education."

Professor Wolf, of Gettysburg Episcopal Theological Seminary, declares:—

"Moral training has, for the most part, been cast out of our Public schools. Every faculty, except the highest and noblest, is exercised and invigorated; but the crowning faculty—that which is designed to animate and govern the others—is contemptuously ignored; and unless its education can be secured, our young men and women will be graduated from our schools as moral imbeciles. This country is FACING A GRAVE SOCIAL PROBLEM."

One more witness, from among hundreds, who might be cited to the same effect—Dr. Washington Gladden, of Columbus, Ohio, in an address before the students of Yale University, recently said:—

"All that saves the Public schools from ruin, in cities, is the self-sacrificing work of the teachers. There is a marked tendency in these schools to lower the system of education, by eliminating God, and making us a sordid, money-hunting race." (Hear, hear.)

I have said enough to prove that Secularism, as an educational system, has been tested and found wanting, and that its fruits are religion, demoralization and national decay. Germany experienced its deadly influence under the Falk Laws; and Germany has once more reverted to Christian education. Italy has witnessed its baneful effects, in the rise of socialism, and the spread of assassination leagues, which have stained the country with blood; and the most patriotic public men in Italy are now calling aloud for the restoration of religious instruction in the schools. America has had a trial of the system; and according to the unanimous opinion of all thinking men in the United States, a few of whom I have cited as witnesses, its results have been,

counsel of their Bishops, represented in Parliament by

THE MOST BRILLIANT AND INCORRUPTIBLE PARTY

that has ever served in the public life of any country (cheers), determined, if need be, to go back into the wilderness again rather than to haul down their flag, or to trundle to ascendancy—shall, let us hope, be ever free from the blighting influence of "Secularism in Education." They have spared bribes and threats in the past; they have made sacrifices, the memory of which remains a stimulus to all who suffer persecution for justice sake; and they have been rewarded for their fidelity beyond their most sanguine hopes. For is not Ireland the "Apostolic land"? While other nations are straining every nerve to acquire wealth, and are offering incense daily before the altar of Mammon, Ireland is satisfied if she can foster a hardy, healthy and devoted race at home which will enable her to supply missionaries who shall bear the light of faith and the consolations of religion to nations that "sit in darkness and under the shadow of death." Standing on her sea-girt rock, she holds aloft the cross of faith in one hand and the torch of science in another; and as the

RAYS FROM THE DISTANT ORIENT

transform her fair tresses into an aureole of sanctity, she bids her sons and daughters, in obedience to the Master's voice, to bear the light of faith to the nations (cheers). And so, amid the noisy wrangling of religious sects, and the unstable vacillation of ethical societies, and the ceaseless clash of opposing forces by land and sea, the children of holy Ireland pursue the even tenor of their ways, preserving the faith undimmed at home, and bearing the light of Christianity to the very ends of the earth. Such is at once our ambition and our destiny; to realise them let us hope and pray that Secularism may never blight our educational systems with its pestiferous breath, but that religion and science may ever remain the fairest daughters of our Motherland (loud and prolonged applause.)

PROTESTANTS OBEY CATHOLIC LAWS AND FESTIVALS.

The Protestant world is living every day of its life under Roman Catholic laws and festivals, and living in cities named after Catholics. Christmas is formed by a union of the Savior's name and the Catholic Mass, and this memorable birthday was originated by the Catholic Bishops, the immediate successors of the Apostles, and brought down through every age by the Catholic Church. Pope Gregory XVI. gave our present calendar of 355 days to a year. Non-Catholics celebrate Easter Sunday and they owe this festival day to Christ, but its perpetuation to the same Church. Pope Victor I. settled the question as to what day should be kept as the resurrection about the year 192, when there was a dispute regarding observance between the eastern and western portions of Christendom. Good Friday, Palm Sunday and every festival of the Christian religion, are part of the very existence of the Catholic Church and its See of Peter in Rome. The commemoration of the first day of the week instead of the seventh can be credited indirectly after the Apostles to the Catholic Church. The inhabitants of New York City, the metropolis of America, are unaware of the fact—that is, many of them—that it is named after and in honor of Catholic James II. who was Duke of York before his accession to the throne of England. San Francisco is named after Francis of Assisi. Santa Monica, Sancto Rosa, Sacramento, St. Augustine, Fla., and many other places too numerous to name are Roman Catholic in every sense. We would urge all those people who hate and despise everything Catholic to petition Congress to change these "Popish" titles of places in the United States and also to look up another discoverer instead of Columbus.

There are many other things that figure in the great historical annals of America that tend to honor Catholicism, such as the great discoveries of rivers and erection of towns that might be effaced from Public school records as conducing to give Roman Catholics a medium of that honor of which they have been robbed by bigoted fanatics in every age. It is a well-known fact that the heroic deeds of French and Irish Catholics, especially the latter, in the Revolution and other American wars, from the battlefield of Bunker Hill to the dreadful scenes of Santiago, have been glossed over or entirely ignored by many writers and speakers because of religious animosity. Some day a great man may rise up, a Protestant like Cobden of England, who laid bare the hideous skeleton of the reformation in all its grinning ugliness, who will give us an impar-

partial history, in which Catholics will receive common justice, for how many people realize that it was Lord Baltimore, a Catholic, who first gave all men and creeds religious liberty in the beautiful lands of the New World.—Inter Mountain Catholic.

A GREAT NEED OF OUR DAY.

We hear much nowadays of the power of the press. It is immense no doubt, for good, but the power of good example is ever an unvarying quantity. We read lately of two striking instances, through each of which a conversion resulted. The first relates the story of a Catholic commercial traveller whose saying his beads one night before going to bed was the means of converting a fallen away, fellow Catholic. The conclusion of the narrative runs:—

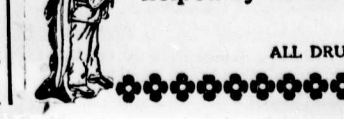
"A few months afterwards the priest of the village wrote to me about as follows: 'Your Irish friend was genuinely repentant and transformed. He died the other day a holy death. For everly did I thank God that he had made in this case the humble instrument of His boundless mercy, and that my rosary was the means of a soul's salvation. How we should be careful of our conduct! How we should give good example and shun bad conduct! Good example saves souls, bad example may damn them.'"

A Source of Temptation.

The Sacred Heart Review, Boston, finds that membership in many of our fraternal and social organizations is a source of temptation to many Catholic men—"temptation to waste their time that should be spent at home with their families, temptation to spend money needed for home wants, and temptation to drink more than is good for them. It is small consolation to a man's family to know that he is attending a meeting of a fraternal organization if they also know that he is likely to come home from that meeting in anything but a sober state. It is surely time that all organizations which make a pretence of doing good should eliminate the drinking feature entirely, should banish it from the spirit as well as from the letter of their regulations, and should try to hold up before their members a standard of sobriety and self-respect."

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